

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of coating a cell comprising the steps of:
placing the cell in a solution of hydrocolloid;
removing the cell from the solution of hydrocolloid ; and
placing the cell in a cross-linking solution after removing the cell from the solution of hydrocolloid, thereby providing the cell with a thin coating of the hydrocolloid; and
storing the cell in solution.
2. (Original) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is an alginate.
3. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is Na-alginate.
4. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is low-methoxy pectin (LMP).
5. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid is either κ or ι carrageenan.
6. (Previously Amended) A method as defined Claim 1, wherein the hydrocolloid solution is in Calcium Adjusted Modified Marc's Ringer (CAMMR) solution.
7. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the cell is a Xenopus laevis egg and embryos.
8. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the cross-linking solution is a solution of Ca, Ba or K ions.

9. (Original) A method as defined in Claim 8, wherein the cross-linking solution is a solution of CaCl_2 , BaCl_2 or KCl .

10. (Currently Amended) A method as defined in Claim 9, wherein the cross-linking solution of CaCl_2 or BaCl_2 is at a concentration of from 0.25% and the KCl solution is at a concentration of 0.5%.

11. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein said thin layer coating of hydrocolloid is up to about 50 micrometer in thickness.

13. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 1, wherein the alginate has a high mannuronic acid (M) content.

14. (Previously Amended) A method as defined in Claim 13 wherein the mannuronic acid (M) content of the alginate is from about 29 to about 61 %.
